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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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AUG 9 2000

In re PATENT APPLICATION of

HAIR et al.

Group Art Unit: 2878 TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800

Appln. No: 09/261,221

Examiner: (unknown)

Filed: March 3, 1999

Title: OPTICAL VEND-SENSING SYSTEM
FOR CONTROL OF VENDING MACHINE

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August 1, 2000

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Hon. Commissioner of Patents
and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified patent application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly add the following new claims:

36 58. (New) An optical vend-sensing system for control of a vending machine which has at least one mechanism arranged for initiating operation upon selection by a customer for vending an article into a vend space through which the article falls into a customer-accessible hopper, the vend space having a defined lateral width and a defined front-to-rear depth,

said sensing system comprising:

two reflecting surfaces, each mounted at opposed lateral extremes of said vend space;

an emitter of electromagnetic radiation arranged at one lateral extreme of said vend space to emit electromagnetic radiation in a beam which is reflected off of each reflector at

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